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Attorneys for Plaintiffs,

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**CARRIE COUSER, INDIVIDUALLY
AND ON BEHALF OF ALL OTHERS
SIMILARLY SITUATED,**

Plaintiffs,

v.

**PRE-PAID LEGAL SERVICES, INC.
d/b/a LEGALSHIELD,**

Defendant.

Case No.: '12CV2575 LAB WVG

CLASS ACTION

**COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF PURSUANT TO
THE TELEPHONE CONSUMER
PROTECTION ACT, 47 U.S.C. § 227, ET
SEQ.**

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

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INTRODUCTION

1. CARRIE COUSER (“Plaintiff”) brings this Class Action Complaint for damages, injunctive relief, and any other available legal or equitable remedies, resulting from the illegal actions of PRE-PAID LEGAL SERVICES, INC. d/b/a LEGALSHIELD (“Defendant”), in negligently contacting Plaintiff on Plaintiff’s cellular telephone, in violation of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, 47 U.S.C. § 227 et seq., (“TCPA”), thereby invading Plaintiff’s privacy. Plaintiff alleges as follows upon personal knowledge as to himself and his own acts and experiences, and, as to all other matters, upon information and belief, including investigation conducted by his attorneys.
2. The TCPA was designed to prevent calls like the ones described within this complaint, and to protect the privacy of citizens like plaintiff. “Voluminous consumer complaints about abuses of telephone technology – for example, computerized calls dispatched to private homes – prompted Congress to pass the TCPA.” *Mims v. Arrow Fin. Servs., LLC*, 132 S. Ct. 740, 744 (2012).
3. In enacting the TCPA, Congress intended to give consumers a choice as to how creditors and telemarketers may call them, and made specific findings that “[t]echnologies that might allow consumers to avoid receiving such calls are not universally available, are costly, are unlikely to be enforced, or place an inordinate burden on the consumer. TCPA, Pub.L. No. 102–243, § 11. Toward this end, Congress found that [b]anning such automated or prerecorded telephone calls to the home, except when the receiving party consents to receiving the call or when such calls are necessary in an emergency situation affecting the health and safety of the consumer, is the only effective means of protecting telephone consumers from this nuisance and privacy invasion. Id. at § 12; see also *Martin v. Leading Edge Recovery Solutions, LLC*, 2012 WL 3292838, at* 4 (N.D.Ill. Aug. 10, 2012) (citing Congressional findings on TCPA’s purpose).
4. Congress also specifically found that “the evidence presented to the Congress indicates that automated or prerecorded calls are a nuisance and an invasion of privacy, regardless of the type of call....” Id. at §§ 12-13. See also, *Mims*, 132 S. Ct. at 744.
5. As Judge Easterbrook of the Seventh Circuit recently explained in a TCPA case

regarding calls to a non-debtor similar to this one:

The Telephone Consumer Protection Act ... is well known for its provisions limiting junk-fax transmissions. A less-litigated part of the Act curtails the use of automated dialers and prerecorded messages to cell phones, whose subscribers often are billed by the minute as soon as the call is answered—and routing a call to voicemail counts as answering the call. An automated call to a landline phone can be an annoyance; an automated call to a cell phone adds expense to annoyance.

Soppet v. Enhanced Recovery Co., LLC, 679 F.3d 637, 638 (7th Cir. 2012).

6. The Ninth Circuit recently affirmed certification of a TCPA class case remarkably similar to this one in *Meyer v. Portfolio Recovery Associates, LLC*, __ F.3d __, 2012 WL 4840814 (9th Cir. Oct. 12, 2012).

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

7. This Court has federal question jurisdiction because this case arises out of violation of federal law. 47 U.S.C. §227(b); *Mims v. Arrow Fin. Servs., LLC*, 132 S. Ct. 740 (2012).
8. Venue is proper in the United States District Court for the Southern District of California pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and 1441(a) because Defendant is subject to personal jurisdiction in the County of San Diego, State of California.

PARTIES

9. Plaintiff is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a citizen and resident of the State of California. Plaintiff is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a “person” as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 153 (10).
10. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendant is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a corporation whose State of Incorporation and principal place of business are in the State of Oklahoma. Defendant, is and at all times mentioned herein was, a corporation and is a “person,” as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 153 (10). Defendant is a company that provides pre-paid legal assistance to its members. Plaintiff alleges that at all times relevant herein Defendant conducted business in the State of California and in the County of San Diego, and within this judicial district.

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FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

11. At all times relevant, Plaintiff was a citizen of the State of California. Plaintiff is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a “person” as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 153 (10).
12. Defendant is, and at all times mentioned herein was, a corporation and a “person,” as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 153 (10).
13. At all times relevant Defendant conducted business in the State of California and in the County of San Diego, within this judicial district.
14. At no time, prior to Defendant’s initial contact with Plaintiff , did Plaintiff provide Plaintiff’s cellular phone number to Defendant through any medium.
15. At no time did Plaintiff ever enter in a business relationship with Defendant.
16. Defendant obtained Plaintiff’s contact information through unknown means.
17. Beginning in June 2012, Defendant began contacting Plaintiff on Plaintiff’s cellular telephone via an “automatic telephone dialing system,” (“ATDS”) as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 227(a)(1) using an “artificial or prerecorded voice” as prohibited by 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1)(A) in order to solicit Plaintiff’s business.
18. This ATDS has the capacity to store or produce telephone numbers to be called, using a random or sequential number generator.
19. The telephone number Defendant called was assigned to a cellular telephone service for which Plaintiff incurs a charge for incoming calls pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1).
20. These telephone calls constituted calls that were not for emergency purposes as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1)(A)(i).
21. To date, Plaintiff has received approximately 40 calls on her cellular telephone from Defendant where Defendant utilizes an “artificial or prerecorded voice” in conjunction with an ATDS.
22. These telephone calls constituted calls that were not for emergency purposes as defined by 47 U.S.C. § 227 (b)(1)(A)(i).
23. Plaintiff did not provide prior express consent to receive calls on Plaintiff’s cellular telephone, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227 (b)(1)(A).

24. These telephone calls by Defendant, or its agent, violated 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1).

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

25. Plaintiff brings this action on behalf of himself and on behalf of and all others similarly situated (“the Class”).

26. Plaintiff represents, and is a member of, the Class, consisting of all persons within the United States who received any telephone call from Defendant or its agent to said person’s cellular telephone made through the use of any automatic telephone dialing system or with an artificial or prerecorded voice, which call was not made for emergency purposes or with the recipient’s prior express consent, within the four years prior to the filing of this Complaint.

27. Defendant and its employees or agents are excluded from the Class. Plaintiff does not know the number of members in the Class, but believes the Class members number in the hundreds of thousands, if not more. Thus, this matter should be certified as a Class action to assist in the expeditious litigation of this matter.

28. Plaintiff and members of the Class were harmed by the acts of Defendant in at least the following ways: Defendant, either directly or through its agents, illegally contacted Plaintiff and the Class members via their cellular telephones by using marketing and artificial or prerecorded voice messages, thereby causing Plaintiff and the Class members to incur certain cellular telephone charges or reduce cellular telephone time for which Plaintiff and the Class members previously paid, and invading the privacy of said Plaintiff and the Class members. Plaintiff and the Class members were damaged thereby.

29. This suit seeks only damages and injunctive relief for recovery of economic injury on behalf of the Class and Sub-Class, and it expressly is not intended to request any recovery for personal injury and claims related thereto. Plaintiff reserves the right to expand the Class definition to seek recovery on behalf of additional persons as warranted as facts are learned in further investigation and discovery.

30. The joinder of the Class members is impractical and the disposition of their claims in the Class action will provide substantial benefits both to the parties and to the court. The Class can be identified through Defendant's records or Defendant's agents' records.
31. There is a well-defined community of interest in the questions of law and fact involved affecting the parties to be represented. The questions of law and fact to the Class predominate over questions which may affect individual Class members, including the following:
- a) Whether, within the four years prior to the filing of this Complaint, Defendant or its agents sent any marketing and artificial or prerecorded voice messages to the Class (other than a message made for emergency purposes or made with the prior express consent of the called party) to a Class member using any automatic dialing system to any telephone number assigned to a cellular phone service;
 - b) Whether Plaintiff and the Class members were damaged thereby, and the extent of damages for such violation; and
 - c) Whether Defendant and its agents should be enjoined from engaging in such conduct in the future.
32. As a person that received at least one marketing and artificial or prerecorded voice message without Plaintiff's prior express consent, Plaintiff is asserting claims that are typical of the Class. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the Class in that Plaintiff has no interests antagonistic to any member of the Class.
33. Plaintiff and the members of the Class have all suffered irreparable harm as a result of the Defendant's unlawful and wrongful conduct. Absent a class action, the Class will continue to face the potential for irreparable harm. In addition, these violations of law will be allowed to proceed without remedy and Defendant will likely continue such illegal conduct. Because of the size of the individual Class member's claims, few, if any, Class members could afford to seek legal redress for the wrongs complained of herein.
34. Plaintiff has retained counsel experienced in handling class action claims and claims involving violations of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act.

35. A class action is a superior method for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy. Class-wide damages are essential to induce Defendant to comply with federal and California law. The interest of Class members in individually controlling the prosecution of separate claims against Defendant is small because the maximum statutory damages in an individual action for violation of privacy are minimal. Management of these claims is likely to present significantly fewer difficulties than those presented in many class claims.

36. Defendant has acted on grounds generally applicable to the Class, thereby making appropriate final injunctive relief and corresponding declaratory relief with respect to the Class as a whole.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

NEGLIGENT VIOLATIONS OF THE TELEPHONE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

47 U.S.C. § 227 ET SEQ.

37. Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.

38. The foregoing acts and omissions of Defendant constitute numerous and multiple negligent violations of the TCPA, including but not limited to each and every one of the above-cited provisions of 47 U.S.C. § 227 et seq.

39. As a result of Defendant's negligent violations of 47 U.S.C. § 227 et seq, Plaintiff and The Class are entitled to an award of \$500.00 in statutory damages, for each and every violation, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(B).

40. Plaintiff and the Class are also entitled to and seek injunctive relief prohibiting such conduct in the future.

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SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
KNOWING AND/OR WILLFUL VIOLATIONS OF THE
TELEPHONE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT
47 U.S.C. § 227 ET SEQ.

41. Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein.
42. The foregoing acts and omissions of Defendant constitute numerous and multiple knowing and/or willful violations of the TCPA, including but not limited to each and every one of the above-cited provisions of 47 U.S.C. § 227 et seq.
43. As a result of Defendant's knowing and/or willful violations of 47 U.S.C. § 227 et seq, Plaintiff and The Class are entitled to an award of \$1,500.00 in statutory damages, for each and every violation, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(B) and 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(C).
44. Plaintiff and the Class are also entitled to and seek injunctive relief prohibiting such conduct in the future.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, Plaintiff respectfully requests the Court grant Plaintiff and The Class members the following relief against Defendant:

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION FOR NEGLIGENT VIOLATION OF
THE TCPA, 47 U.S.C. § 227 ET SEQ.

- As a result of Defendant's negligent violations of 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1), Plaintiff seeks for himself and each Class member \$500.00 in statutory damages, for each and every violation, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(B).
- Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(A), injunctive relief prohibiting such conduct in the future.
- Any other relief the Court may deem just and proper.

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**SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION FOR NEGLIGENT VIOLATION OF
THE TCPA, 47 U.S.C. § 227 ET SEQ.**

- As a result of Defendant's negligent violations of 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(1), Plaintiff seeks for himself and each Class member \$500.00 in statutory damages, for each and every violation, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(B).
- Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 227(b)(3)(A), injunctive relief prohibiting such conduct in the future.
- Any other relief the Court may deem just and proper.

TRIAL BY JURY

45. Pursuant to the seventh amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, Plaintiffs are entitled to, and demand, a trial by jury.

Dated: October 23, 2012

Respectfully submitted,

KAZEROUNI LAW GROUP, APC

By: /s/ Abbas Kazerounian
ABBAS KAZEROUNIAN, ESQ.
ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

CARRIE COUSER, on behalf of herself and all others similarly situated,

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff _____
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Law Offices of Todd M. Friedman, P.C.
369 S. Doheny Dr., #415, Beverly Hills, CA 90211

DEFENDANTS

PRE-PAID LEGAL SERVICES, INC. d/b/a LEGALSHIELD,

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant _____
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known) **'12CV2575 LAB WVG**

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☒ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☒ 4 Diversity (vam)
(Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- | | PTF | DEF | | PTF | DEF |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Citizen of This State | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	PERSONAL INJURY <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury PERSONAL INJURY <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Med. Malpractice <input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud <input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage <input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 610 Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> 620 Other Food & Drug <input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input type="checkbox"/> 630 Liquor Laws <input type="checkbox"/> 640 R.R. & Truck <input type="checkbox"/> 650 Airline Regs. <input type="checkbox"/> 660 Occupational Safety/Health <input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 PROPERTY RIGHTS <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark SOCIAL SECURITY <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 810 Selective Service <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 892 Economic Stabilization Act <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 894 Energy Allocation Act <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 900 Appeal of Fee Determination Under Equal Access to Justice <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
REAL PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	CIVIL RIGHTS <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 444 Welfare <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights	PRISONER PETITIONS <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence Habeas Corpus: <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition		

V. ORIGIN

(Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding
- ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
- ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
- ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
- ☐ 5 Transferred from another district (specify)
- ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation
- ☐ 7 Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing. (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):
47. U.S.C. § 227 et seq. 28.1331 (vam)

Brief description of cause:

Violation of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

☒ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23

DEMAND \$ 5,000,000.00

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☒ Yes ☐ No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY

(See instructions):

JUDGE

DOCKET NUMBER

DATE

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

10/23/2012

s/Todd M. Friedman

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # _____ AMOUNT _____ APPLYING IFP _____ JUDGE _____ MAG. JUDGE _____

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